SPEECH

OF THE

Rt. Hon. HENRY GRATTAN,

ON THE

RE-AGITATION

ON THE SUBJECT

OF

TITHES,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1788.

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Mr. GRATTAN's

SPEECH

ON

TITHES.

MR. SPEAKER,

I SUBMIT to you certain great principles as propoſitions to the church—to ſtand the foundation of future bills, to ſtand the ſentiments of the Commons, and to be (if theſe ſentiments are reſiſted by a right reverend bench) our acquittal and juſtification to the public.

THE firſt reſolution relates to barren land.

Reſolved, That it would greatly encourage the improvement of barren lands in Ireland, if ſaid lands, for a certain time after being reclaimed, were exempt from the payment of tithe.

THIS

THIS is a maxim of politics, and requires nothing more for its adoption on the part of the church but the exerciſe of Chriſtian charity and common ſenſe. This is the law of England—and true in the wilds of America, as well as in England, a principle which barbarity and civilization equally proclaim.

THIS does not aſk any thing from the clergy except the uſe of their underſtanding—that they will reſtrain an unſeaſonable appetite—poſtpone a premature voracity. That they will on this occaſion indulge themſelves in a ſagacity ſuperior to that of the fowls of the air who devour the ſeed, and equal to the wiſdom of the hind, who waits for the harveſt.—Have mercy on the infant labours of mankind; reſpect the plough, and inſtead of dogging its paces as a conſtable would a felon, imitate the barbarous, but in this inſtance more civilized Perſian monarch, who began his reign by taking the plough in his royal hand, and did homage to that patient inſtrument which feeds mankind.

TO ſay that the bill in queſtion enriched the community at the expence of the clergy, was but a poor and uncharitable argument, the reſult of hot counſel, and crabbed ſentiments. If it does enrich the community, it muſt finally enrich the clergy. It does enrich the community—true—but not at your expence—you give nothing. What! will the eagle come down that you may tithe him, and the ſtag of the mountain ſtop at thy bidding? You give nothing except to yourſelves and your ſucceſſors the chance of get-

ting ſomething from that which but for ſuch an encouragement might remain to you and to us, to all eternity, wretched and unprofitable. Suppoſing therefore that the clergy were in no particular to make ſacrifices to the good of their flock, that they were to get every law they aſked for themſelves, and to aſſent to none on the behalf of their pariſhioners—yet ſtill ſhould they accede to this meaſure—on a principle of enlightened ſelfiſhneſs—on a principle, not of piety, but of uſury, and to reſiſt it would argue an incapacity to ſee not only the public intereſt but their own.

On ſuch a principle of narrow and ignorant precaution had the laity proceeded, they would never have granted the premium on the inland carriage of corn, nor on the export of corn, nor on the export of linen, on the ſale of woollen, nor the growth of flax, nor of rape: they would have check'd the growth of agriculture, and of manufacture, and of courſe the growth of tithe. Make the precaution of ſome of the heads of the church the folly of the laity—extend their principles to us, and we ſtarve the community.

To ſuppoſe that the encouragement given to barren land would lay the foundation of law ſuits, is only to argue in ignorance of the law—has the law done ſo with reſpect to flax, done ſo with hemp or bog? and yet ſuch laws have exiſted. Don't they know that the barren land bill was not an original bill, but an extenſion of the proviſions of acts already in exiſtence, from whence none of

theſe

theſe conſequences had flowed, and therefore this objection only proves the objectors to be, I won't ſay bad lawyers, bad huſbandmen, but to be, I will ſay, in their knowledge of huſbandry, and their knowledge of law, vaſtly inferior to themſelves in the ſcience of divinity; and while I excuſe the errors of ſome of the reverend bench, I much honour the ſenſe of thoſe of their own order on that bench, who did moſt decidedly and explicitly differ from them; who ſaw that the clergy had a common intereſt in the country; that it was inconſiſtent in them to deſire to partake of the growth of the kingdom, and to check that growth when the opportunity occurred; who ſaw the feeble policy of any thing like a little combination againſt the general ſenſe; who thought the beſt method of preventing a faction in the laity, was to reſiſt a faction in the church; and who alſo thought that the two Bills, the Hemp Bill, and the Barren Land Bill, recommended by Government, ſent up by the unanimous ſenſe of the Houſe of Commons —proved to be uſeful by the example of Great-Britain, and eſpouſed by public wiſhes, was not exactly the ground on which the Biſhops ſhould poſt themſelves againſt the intereſt of the community.

I HAVE mentioned that this meaſure is ſupported on principles of Chriſtianity.

ISAIAH makes two predictions—The one is a denunciation againſt ſuch as oppoſe the kingdom of Chriſt; the ſecond an annunciation to thoſe who receive it, and he makes

makes the point of the curſe that very ſterility which the enemies of this meaſure would promote, and the point of the bleſſing that very fertility which the bill went to encourage: "The wilderneſs and ſolitary place ſhall be glad, "and the deſert ſhall bloſſom as the roſe."

I HAVE taken the prediction of Iſaiah, and reduced its principle to a reſolution, which I have already read, and which I ſhall have the honour to propound to you, and I put it to grave authority to verify their prophet.

IN the meaſure to which I refer there was a particular compact if report ſays true: three bills were brought in, two were to be rejected by the influence of Government in this Houſe, provided the third ſhould paſs the Lords, without the oppoſition of the Church. Thus the public were to receive ſome benefit, and the exceſſive zeal of a certain part of the right reverend bench, was to be ſhielded by the hand of Government from repeated opportunities of expoſing their principles.

THE compact was fulfilled on the part of Government; two bills were rejected in the Houſe of Commons, by compact, and the third deſtroyed in the other Houſe, in breach of compact. A miniſter is, I muſt ſuppoſe, a heretic, with whom holy men need not obſerve faith. To deſtroy this bill, the firſt method that occurred was petition; the petitioners very few in number, but certainly very reſpectable names, complain that they will be greatly prejudiced by the

 improvement

improvement of barren lands *; they petitioned againſt it in the moſt unqualified manner, not againſt any particular clauſe, nor againſt the frame of the bill, but againſt the bill itſelf. The names are few, but if names alone, without reaſons, could give weight to a petition, this petition has that weight I acknowledge. I ſhould be ſorry to offend againſt the intereſt or the apprehenſions of the petitioners; unable to reconcile both, and obliged to make a choice, I muſt advance their intereſt in defiance of their diſpoſitions. Petition was not deemed ſufficient; another method of damnation was reſorted to—amendment, and the amendment was a clauſe of *encroachment*—an encroachment of the worſt kind, an extenſion of the power of the ſpiritual courts on the temporal; the ſpiritual courts were to ſtand in the place of judge and jury. With what

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* To the Right Hon. the LORDS SPIRITUAL and TEMPORAL, in Parliament aſſembled,

The humble Petition of ſeveral of the CLERGYMEN of the Church of Ireland, on behalf of themſelves and others of the ſaid Clergy,

SHEWETH,

That your petitioners apprehend that the clergy of the ſaid church in general, and your petitioners in particular, will be greatly prejudiced in their properties, in caſe a bill now depending before your Lordſhips, to extend the proviſions of an "Act "to encourage the improvement of barren and waſte land and "bogs, and planting of timber trees and orchards," ſhould paſs into a law.

Your petitioners therefore humbly beſeech your Lordſhips to permit them to be heard by counſel againſt the ſaid bill.

And your petitioners will pray.

what ſafety you will decide when I read you two decrees of the ſpiritual court of Cloyne, one excommunicating a countryman for refuſing to pay tithe of turf againſt law, and the other excommunicating eight perſons for the ſame illegal reaſon. The idea of their amendment was this—"No encroachment on ſterility; no invaſions of the plough on barren land, unleſs you will at the ſame time invade the bounderies of your laws." This preſumptuous amendment being moſt judiciouſly withdrawn, becauſe it could not have paſſed, (for it could not have paſſed the Houſe of Lords ultimately) another was introduced not equally miſchievous: but I ſpeak with the greateſt deference to high authority—a little unintelligible—a little long—a little perplexed, and a little embarraſſing—a clauſe in an old miſcellaneous act is extracted to be applied to the caſe of barren land, to which in the Engliſh act it had no immediate reference. The above clauſe requires two witneſſes on the part of the countryman, and gives to the parſon double coſts, and obliges the countryman to declare in probition, laying him under the difficulty of an action at law.

THE bill ſo loaded juſtly fell: thoſe vigilant, but in this inſtance, moſt miſtaken men, who deſtroyed it, will hereafter ſee the wiſdom of adopting the bill without the firſt amendment, without the ſecond amendment, and without any amendment at all.—One ſhould imagine ſome characters took a pride in barren land; in this ſentiment only have they reſiſted the bill, founded on the Engliſh act, enabling the Biſhops to grant long leaſes—is it not enough that a 13th

part of the land of the country ſhould be in the hands of eccleſiaſtical corporations? Is it neceſſary that ſuch land ſhould be as barren as poſſible? You need not aſk which is church land in Ireland; you know it by the infallible traces of barrenneſs and miſery; contiguity to a great town is not ſufficient to give life and pulſation to this palſeyed part of the creation; one would imagine the eſtate was doing penance on earth, and that the inhabitants had laid up all their treaſures in Heaven; or were here in a ſtate of Purgatory, under Proteſtant biſhops. Strange, that the latter ſhould object to a tenure which would enable them to make freeholders, and encourage the Proteſtant intereſt; ſtrange that they ſhould inſiſt on keeping their eſtates on terms at once hoſtile to repreſentation and conformity. The next reſolution which I ſhall propoſe to you is one reſpecting flax: It is as follows:

Reſolved, That a domeſtic ſupply of flax is an object to which all his Majeſty's ſubjects of Ireland ſhould contribute.

2. *That this Houſe has greatly contributed to ſaid object by various bounties, but that the linen manufacture has only flouriſhed in thoſe parts of the kingdom, where a total exemption from, or a ſmall compoſition for tithe of flax have exiſted.*

3. *Reſolved, That in order to extend the linen manufacture, ſaid exemption or compoſition ſhould be made general.*

THIS too is a principle—the rudiments of manufacture ſhould not be tithed—ſurely not of your ſtaple, and above all, not of your only ſtaple manufacture; to advance this has been long the ſpeech from the throne, the echo of that ſpeech your addreſs, and the object of various and expenſive premiums; to introduce it into the South has been long the wiſh of that province; to attend to it now has become your particular duty, becauſe Ruſſia has laid a duty of five per cent. on her exports to theſe countries, the treaty with England being at an end. Will any man in the South ſow flax to pay 12s. an acre tithe, when in the North he pays but 6d. per farm? The deſpair of the ſouthern provinces to grow flax in any degree, was admitted by a propoſal to diſtribute the flax premiums into provincial portions, on an allegation that the North took a great proportion, and the South little or nothing; that is, the North does grow flax becauſe it don't pay tithe; and the South does not grow flax, becauſe it does pay tithe; and thus embarraſſed by the tithe, the wretched expedient was to take the bounty from the North, in order to pay the tithe of the South.

HERE again I muſt do juſtice to Government; they did intend a modus for flax as well as for hemp, and one reaſon, perhaps, among others, was the late duty on Ruſſian flax. This gracious and benign intention of Government was by epiſcopal interference rendered abortive; that ſame epiſcopal interference on which the nation is to charge the loſs of the barren land bill, did, with the beſt intentions to be ſure,

ſure, but the worſt effect, oppoſe both ſalutary meaſures—the modus for hemp, and the modus for flax.

THAT oppoſition to the Hemp Bill failed, becauſe that Bill was deemed beneficial to the navy of England, and was an Engliſh as well as an Iriſh meaſure; but that oppoſition to the Flax Bill ſucceeded, becauſe flax was only material to the Iriſh manufacturer, and was a meaſure purely Iriſh. The Hemp Bill, however, did not paſs unmoleſted, and the ſame regard in holy men, for ties with a Miniſter, ſtill operated; it was teized and perſecuted by that ſame epiſcopal interference. This bill was to have been defeated by petition *. The petitioners complain of this bill in the ſame unqualified manner as in the inſtance of barren land; they are to be ruined by the extent of manufacture—petition was not relied on. This bill was alſo to have been defeated by amendment: that amendment, intended by way of preamble, ſet forth, that hemp was an article neceſſary

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The humble Petition of ſeveral of the CLERGYMEN of the Church of Ireland, on behalf of themſelves and others of the ſaid Clergy,

SHEWETH,

That your petitioners, conceiving that themſelves and their brethren may be materially injured by a bill now before this Houſe, intituled "An Act for the better aſcertaining the tithes "of Hemp," and which is committed for Saturday next, humbly beſeech this Right Honourable Houſe to permit them to be heard by counſel againſt the ſaid bill.

And petitioners will pray.

ſary for the navy of England, to which all his Majeſty's ſubjects ſhould contribute—a facility this in a reverend quarter to grant public money for new purpoſes, beyond the bounds of duty. This preamble contained three principles: firſt, an implied proteſt againſt the principle of modus in favour of *Iriſh* manufacture: ſecondly, an expreſs aſſent to that principle, when it was in favour of the Britiſh navy: thirdly, a principle of ſupply to that navy, originating in the Lords, in breach of the privilege of the Commons, at the ſuggeſtion of the ſpiritual Peers; as the other amendments encroached on the temporal courts, ſo this encroached on the Commons.——This amendment being moſt wiſely given up, becauſe impracticable, as well as moſt improper, the whole repugnance to the bill ended in an idle reſolution, declaring, *that a domeſtic ſupply of hemp may greatly contribute to the maritime protection of this kingdom,—an object to be promoted by the united exertions of all his Majeſty's ſubjects:* of which reſolution the reverend petitioners have the moſt reaſon to complain; for it ſays, *you petition againſt the manufacturing part of your own flock. There you are perfectly right, and we are with you; but your petition goes alſo againſt the intereſt of the navy of England. There you go too far: beſides, this is a queſtion of Britiſh Government, and we, on this point, not only leave you, but we proteſt againſt you, and have entered on the journals our reſolution accordingly.*

So it appears as the buſineſs was miſmanaged; but thoſe who know the zeal, on this occaſion, of ſome of the Right

Right Reverend Bench, muſt be convinced that this never was their intention; on the contrary, they did moſt entirely approve of the petitioners and the petition, and had not perhaps confined their connection with the petition to the cold and languid office of mere approbation.

THE next reſolution relates to the ſuſtenance of the poor, as the two others relate immediately to their induſtry: it is propoſed to put the poor of the South on the ſame footing with the poor of the North, Eaſt, and Weſt, by exempting his potatoe-garden from tithe.—When we ſtate that potatoes are the food of the poor, we underſtate their importance—they are more; they are the protection of the rich againſt a poor rate, and therefore invaluable to you, as well as to the peaſant.

Reſolved, That potatoes are the principal ſubſiſtence of the poor in Ireland, and are, in a great part of the kingdom, moſt fortunately exempt from tithe.

Reſolved, That it would much contribute to relieve the poor of the South of this kingdom, if the benefit of ſaid exemption was extended to them; and if it ſhall be made to appear that the owners of tithe ſhall ſuffer thereby, this Houſe will make them juſt compenſation.

IN three-fourths of this kingdom potatoes pay no tithe; in the South they not only pay, but pay moſt heavily. They pay frequently in proportion to the poverty and helpleſſneſs of the

the countryman; for in the South it is the practice to crouch to the rich, and to encroach upon the poor; hence perhaps in the South the mutability of the common people. What ſo galling, what ſo inflammatory, as the comparative view of the condition of his Majeſty's ſubjects in one part of the kingdom and the other!—In one part their ſuſtenance free, and in another tithed in the greateſt degree; ſo that a grazier coming from the Weſt to the South ſhall inform the latter that with him neither potatoes nor hay are tithed; and a weaver coming from the North ſhall inform the South, that in his country neither potatoes nor flax are tithed; and thus are men, in the preſent unequal and unjuſt ſtate of things, taught to repine, not only by their intercourſe with the paſtor, but with one another.

To redreſs this requires no ſpeculation—no extraordinary exerciſe of the human faculties—no long fatiguing proceſs of reaſon and calculation, but merely to extend to the poor of the South, the benefits which are enjoyed by his Majeſty's ſubjects in the other parts of Ireland; it is to put the people of the South on a level with their fellow-creatures.—If it ſhall be ſaid that ſuch an exemption would cauſe a great loſs to the parſon—what a terrible diſcovery does that objection diſcloſe! that the clergy of the South are principally ſupported by the poor, by thoſe whom they ought as moral men to relieve, and Chriſtian men ſupport, according to the ſtricteſt diſcipline of the church.

To excite a certain quarter to this principle, perhaps the beſt method would be the ſtimulation of example.—I ſhall accordingly produce two examples, one example drawn from the country ſuppoſed to be the moſt bigoted in Europe, and the other from that man ſuppoſed to be the moſt prone to clerical avarice and ambition.—The firſt the kingdom of Spain, the latter is the Pope. In 1780, Pope Pius the 6th ſends a brief to the King of Spain, enabling him to diſpoſe of one-third of eccleſiaſtical eſtates and benefices in his preſentation, to which no cure of ſouls was annexed, in charity; and further ſets forth in this brief this reaſon, that the relief and ſuccour of the poor was particularly incumbent on him. The King of Spain in 1783, purſuant to this brief, publiſhes his edict, reciting the brief, and appointing a commiſſion to diſpoſe of the third as above recited, in the ſupport of the poor, and then he ſpecifies the objects; endowments of all kind of retreats and receptacles for the poor, ſuch as hoſpitals and houſes of charity, foundations for orphans and foundlings.—The better to enforce the execution of the firſt edict, the King of Spain publiſhes another, commanding, in a peremptory manner, the execution of the firſt, and he adds a principle inſeparable from the claims of tithe, that ſuch charitable aids peculiarly belong to eccleſiaſtical rents, according to the moſt found and conſtant diſcipline of the church.

Here are the Sovereign Pontiff of the Catholic faith, and the Catholic King of Spain, diſtributing one-third of a part of the revenues of their church for the poor; and here are

ſome

ſome of the enlightened doctors of our church deprecating ſuch a principle, and guarding their riches againſt the encroaching of Chriſtian charity; I hope they will never again afford us ſuch an opportunity of comparing them with the Pope, or contraſting them with the Apoſtles.—I don't think their riches will be diminiſhed; but if they were to be ſo—is not the queſtion directly put to them. Which will they prefer; their flock or their riches? For which did Chriſt die, or the Apoſtles ſuffer martyrdom, or Paul preach, or Luther proteſt? Was it for the tithe of flax, or the tithe of barren land, or the tithe of potatoes, or the tithe proctor, or the tithe farmer, or the tithe pig?—Your riches are ſecure; but, if they were impaired by your acts of benevolence, does *our* religion depend on *your* riches? On ſuch a principle your Saviour ſhould have accepted of the kingdoms of the earth, and their glory, and have capitulated with the Devil for the propagation of the faith. Never was a great principle rendered prevalent by power or riches. Low and artificial means are reſorted to for the fulfilling the little views of men, their love of power, their avarice, or ambition; but to apply to the great deſign of God ſuch wretched auxiliaries, is to forget his divinity, and to deny his omnipotence. What! does the word come more powerfully from a dignitary in purple and fine linen, than it came from the poor Apoſtle with nothing but the Spirit of the Lord on his lips, and the glory of God ſtanding on his right hand? What! my Lords, not cultivate barren land; not encourage the manufactures of your country; not relieve the poor of your flock, if the church is to be at any expence

thereby—where ſhall we find this principle? Not in the Bible; I have adverted to the ſacred writings without criticiſm I allow, but not without devotion—there is not in any part of them ſuch a ſentiment—not in the purity of Chriſt, nor the poverty of the apoſtles, nor the prophecy of Iſaiah, nor the patience of Job, nor the harp of David, nor the wiſdom of Solomon!—No, my Lords, on this ſubject your Bible is againſt you—the precepts and practice of the primitive church againſt you—the great word increaſe and multiply—the axiom of philoſophy, that nature does nothing in vain—the productive principle that formed the ſyſtem, and defends it againſt the ambition and encroachments of its own elements; the reproductive principle which continues the ſyſtem, and which makes vegetation ſupport life, and life adminiſter back again to vegetation; taking from the grave its ſterile quality, and making death itſelf propagate to life and ſucceſſion—the plenitude of things, and the majeſty of nature through all her organs, manifeſt againſt ſuch a ſentiment. This blind fatality of error, which, under pretence of defending the wealth of the prieſthood, checks the growth of mankind, arreſts his induſtry, and makes the ſterility of the planet a part of its religion.

As I have propoſed three meaſures for the benefit of the people, I ſhall now ſubmit a fourth for the benefit of the church. It is a reſolution which is as follows:

Reſolved, That this Houſe will be ready to relieve the

owners of tithe from the neceſſity of drawing the ſame; and to give ſaid owners a power of recovering the value of the ſame, in all caſes, by civil bill, or otherwiſe, provided ſaid owners of tithe ſhall conform to certain rateages to be aſcertained by act of Parliament.

THE reſolution will be beſt explained by a bill which I have drawn, and which I mean to propoſe hereafter—*the brief* of which I will now ſtate to you. The bill enacts that every owner of tithe ſhall be relieved from the difficulty of drawing the ſame, by civil bill, for any ſum whatſoever; provided ſaid owner of tithe ſhall conform to certain rateages in the bill ſet forth—theſe rateages will be ſuch as Parliament ſhall think proper, different, perhaps according to the different provinces, and the reſult of the enquiry of provincial committees.

I HAVE ſet forth in the bill for Munſter, ſuch a rateage as was nearly ſtated by learned authority as the average rateage of the richeſt dioceſe therein; the principal articles of which are,

6s. POTATOES, *the Iriſh acre.*
6s. WHEAT.
5s. BARLEY.
3s. MEADOW.
3s. OATS.

THE bill enacts, that in the neighbourhood of a city the tithe of meadow ſhall be increaſed; it further enacts, that

that the owner of tithe ſhall have a power, on due notice, to enter in order to ſurvey: it enacts, that the above rateages ſhall be eſtimated as worth ſo many ſtone of bread corn, which is every ſeven years to be valued by the clerk of the market, who ſtrikes the averages for the kingdom; that ſeptennial valuation of the corn, to be the ſeptennial rateages for the owner of tithe.

THE bill enacts, that all ſmall dues ſhall ceaſe, and that inſtead thereof, in pariſhes where ſmall dues ſhall have been paid for theſe laſt ten years, a valuation ſhall be made of ſuch by a perſon appointed in veſtry; ſaid valuation to be levied not off the poor, nor the particular individual, but generally after the manner of baronial charges. My idea and fixed intention being to relieve the poor of the South from the tithe of potatoes, and the North from ſmall dues; an endeavour which, however oppoſed, will by perſeverance ſucceed—it is rational, it is juſt.—The bill contains a proviſo, which ſaves and confirms all kind of moduſſes or exemption; ſo that what has not hitherto paid, ſhall not pay now:—thus potatoes and other articles, where they have not uſually paid, ſhall not become titheable.

THE next reſolution is to compel reſidence: 'tis ſtrange that ſuch a reſolution ſhould ever have become neceſſary.

Reſolved, That the better to ſecure the reſidence of the clergy, a moderate tax on non-reſidents would be expedient.

In the long conteſt of the clergy on the ſubject of tithe, I don't find that reſidence has been much inſiſted on, as uſeful to the Proteſtant intereſt, though tithe has been thought indiſpenſable. Provided tithe ſhall be paid, it ſeems what is done for the tithe, the preaching and the praying, is not material in the opinion of grave and reverend perſonages.—The army don't act by curate—the commiſſioners, the judges don't act by deputation. I have never heard of virtual redemption, ſalvation by remote and magnetical operation:—reſidence is required by canon, common, and ſtatute law; by the canon law, a parſon who left his living without leave was deprived—by the common law it appears reſidence was neceſſary, for when an action was brought againſt the rector of B. he pleaded that he was commorant in D.—the plea was overruled, becauſe he had not denied himſelf to be rector of B. and his pariſh determined his locality neceſſary by ſeveral ſtatutes. The acts of Henry 8th after 40 days non-reſidence impoſes a fine; the act of Edward the 6th after 80 days abſence, diſables the parſon from recovering on his own leaſes—the act of Henry the 6th ſubjects a parſon who leaves the country to the forfeiture of his annual income—but though the law were ſilent, decency on this occaſion is loud: what a caſt and complexion are thrown on this queſtion and thoſe who ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſt on the law for tithe, and ſo commonly tranſgreſs the body of law that requires them to attend to the duties of religion! In England reſidence is better obſerved and enforced; the practice of England has ſhewn a greater regard both for huſ-

bandry

bandry and prayer; and yet in England reſidence is not more neceſſary, becauſe our lower people want more inſtruction, and our country can leſs afford any addition to the abſentee drain, to which an abſentee tithe, and abſentee goſpel are ſad aggravations!—Talk not of a want of glebe houſe, or even of churches: has the preſbyter a glebe houſe? has the prieſt a glebe houſe? does the latter preach the errors of the church of Rome from a ſtraw built hovel, and do our clergy to preach the truth of the Proteſtant religion require a manſion?—had the firſt fruits been by the richer parts of their own order, and particularly the Biſhops, faithfully and juſtly valued, and applied to the building of churches, and the increaſe of poor livings, the advocates for non-reſidence would want their voluptuous apology.—But it has happened that the firſt fruits by a remote and antiquated valuation, are rendered of no account, —they don't, by that valuation, which was made in the reign of Henry the 8th, produce more than 430l. at this day the biſhopricks alone amount to near 70,000l. a year, the firſt fruit of which, without going farther, would be a great fund for building of churches and glebe-houſes, and increaſing poor livings. You ſee that in fact the firſt fruits are now a moſt miſerable modus; and it is very remarkable, that the very men who object to any modus, however rational, in favour of the manufacturer, have themſelves ſet up a modus againſt the church—a modus the moſt irrational and illiberal, againſt the poor of their own order, and the houſe of their own God! "We can't re-"ſide, becauſe we have neither houſe nor church;" that

is,

is, the richer part of your order have taken to themſelves the funds of the church, and now you have no place to pray in.

But though I would compel reſidence, I would compel it by a moderate proceſs; a moderate tax to commence after abſence for a certain time. I would not leave the diſpenſing with reſidence to the biſhop, becauſe I would not put into his hands the talents and ſuffrages of the parochial clergy—I would not enable him to ſay, Sir, you have written too freely on conſtitutional ſubjects, you muſt reſide; or, Sir, you have voted for the popular candidate, and muſt reſide.—I would not make reſidence an inſtrument of undue influence, nor would I wiſh to make the parochial clergy mean and ſubſervient to their biſhop.—I would compel reſidence by a tax, and that ſhould be moderate, with certain allowances; my principle with reſpect to the reſidence of the miniſter being this, his pariſh ought to be his home, but ought not to be his priſon.

I have ſubmitted the reſolutions—I mean to put the Houſe in poſſeſſion of them—all I deſire is that they may have a fair examination—of Government all I aſk is impartiality—all I deprecate is predetermination—I do not deſire that they ſhould aſſent to either my facts or principles, but I deſire a fair trial for both—I deſire moreover, that in holding their deliberation they may not take into their cabinet the enemy—if theſe principles are falſe, they will die of themſelves, without the interpoſition of Government; if right, they will

at laſt prevail, and then Government would be obliged to retract a reſiſtance precipitately made.—As to the ſouthern peaſantry, all I aſk on their part is *Peace*. If the White-Boys break out again, I give up this buſineſs.—I will be the firſt to ſupport ſtrong meaſures of coercion.—The gentlemen of the South ſhould inform them, that if they had originally repreſented the oppreſſions they ſuffer under tithe by humble petition to Parliament, they muſt have been redreſſed; the parſon and tithe farmer would not have choſen to have defended, or to continue demands publicly ſtigmatiſed for extortion and avarice. In a free country, the mere promulgation of injury, is the certainty of redreſs; but thoſe deſperate wretches had not the courage to apply to the Legiſlature, and had the deſpair to apply to outrage; the conſequence was, as always muſt be, they conſigned their bodies to the hangman, and left to their families a continuation of the grievances, and involved in their diſgrace a great part of the peaſantry who were equally oppreſſed, and entirely innocent.—The truth is, the tithe farmer had no caſe but the White-Boy, they both ſtood on the crimes of the other, and murder was a greater offence than extortion.

With reſpect to a right reverend bench, I mean a part of that bench, all I aſk is *Temper*.—I ſtated ſeveral allegations—I am ready to prove them.—I ſtated that in ſome parts of the South the demands of tithe had exceeded the bounds of law; I repeat the allegation. I ſtated, that the proctor had in many places demanded and received a certain

tain *per centage*, called proctorage, againſt law and charity; I repeat that allegation. I ſtated that, in parts of the South, certain miniſters, or their proctors, had been guilty of exactions which were unconſciable; and I ſtated alſo, that they had recently, and greatly, and unconſcionably, encreaſed their rateages: I repeat that allegation. I ſtated, that the tithe farmers did very generally, in the parts diſturbed, oppreſs *the common people*, and had exceeded their legal powers, or had moſt groſsly abuſed them: theſe allegations I repeat now—and am ready to go into proofs, whenever gentlemen chuſe to give me ſuch an opportunity.

I am not reſponſible for the preciſe quantity of every return ſtated to me.—Some of the ſtatements are official, and can't be diſputed, and are enormous; others come from the oppreſſed, and may be ſanguine. I am not reſponſible for the preciſe quantities in ſuch a caſe: but I am reſponſible for this allegation, that there exiſts *great oppreſſion*—I repeat it again, *there exiſts great oppreſſion*.

As to the reſolutions which I now ſubmit, and which next *ſeſſion* I ſhall move, the Right Reverend quarter will conſider that ſome of theſe propoſitions are in their principles already the law of England. With what juſtice can they attempt to deprive Ireland of the benefit of ſuch laws? Ireland, a country requiring ſo much more encouragement, and paying abundantly more to the church.—A celebrated Biſhop in England has calculated that the income of the church in England, including all biſhopricks, and

even the eſtates of the univerſities, would, if diſtributed, amount to 150l. for each clergyman.—A learned Biſhop in Ireland has calculated, that, excluding biſhopricks and univerſities, the income of the church in Ireland would amount to 148l. for each clergyman.—Thus, by this calculation, excluding their great riches, I mean the biſhopricks, the miniſters of the Proteſtant church of Ireland have within 2l. as much as in England; and, including biſhopricks, muſt have beyond all compariſon more than in England, while the extent of the cures is incomparably leſs, even ſuppoſing our clergy were all to reſide, and while this kingdom has two other orders of prieſthood to ſupport.—Such of our Biſhops who come from another country, and have intercepted the views of ſome of the younger branches of our beſt families here, will naturally wiſh to make ſome compenſation.—The laws of the country to which they owe their birth, they I ſuppoſe will not object to communicate to this country, to which they owe their ſituation.

SOME of the reſolutions are not only founded on principles of huſbandry, but maxims of Chriſtianity; theſe, I hope, will not meet with inveterate oppoſition from any of the Right Reverend Bench.—Thoſe of them the moſt adverſe and inveterate, will ſoften, when they conſider the Chriſtianity of clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry; or rather, indeed, of ſuffering the naked and the hungry to feed and to clothe themſelves, by encouraging their manufacture—giving certain privileges to their infant labours, and by leaving in their principal food the

poor unoppreſſed by avarice and exaction under any pretence whatſoever. However, if this ſhall not be the caſe, —if theſe ſound doctrines, and theſe charitable principles are received by ſome of a certain quarter with hardneſs of heart, and their author with clerical ſcurrility, I cannot help it, I ſhall perſiſt notwithſtanding, making my ſolemn appeal againſt ſuch men to their own goſpel; which as it is the foundation of *their* power, ſo muſt it be the limits of *our* veneration.

THE END.